



# *Keeping Your Muscles Healthy*

## Why is muscle health important?

You have more than 600 muscles in your body. Muscles help you walk, move, lift things, pump blood through your body, and breathe. Strong muscles also help you keep your balance, so you are less likely to fall or slip and get hurt.

## What do your muscles need to stay healthy?

- Different kinds of exercise to work all of your muscles. When you make your muscles work, they respond by growing stronger. You could walk one day and lift weights the next.
- A balanced diet, including plenty of vegetables. This will help manage your weight and will provide a variety of nutrients for your muscles.
- Listen to your body. If your muscles are bothering you, tell a doctor about any discomfort you feel.

## Find out more!

The National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases, National Institutes of Health, has **free**, easy-to-read information about muscle health. Download or order these and other topics at <http://www.niams.nih.gov/multicultural/>, or call toll free at **877-226-4267** (TTY: 301-565-2966).

- Childhood Sports Injuries and Their Prevention: A Guide for Parents with Ideas for Kids
- Exercise and Physical Activity: Your Everyday Guide from the National Institute on Aging
- Exercises to Try: Balance Exercises (online only)  
<http://nihseniorhealth.gov>
- Exercises to Try: Strength Exercises (online only)  
<http://nihseniorhealth.gov>
- Sprains and Strains: Easy-to-Read Fast Facts



National Institute of  
Arthritis and Musculoskeletal  
and Skin Diseases